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INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 HA-05 SY-05 MCT-02 TRSE-00 OMB-01  
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DRAFTED BY ARA/ECA:JBUMPUS:MG  
APPROVED BY ARA:VPVAKY  
ARA:RCGUZMAN

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P 151548Z JAN 79  
FM SECSTATE WASHDC  
TO AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES PRIORITY

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E.O. 112065GDS, 1/13/85 (BUMPUS, JAMES N.)

TAGS: PINT, SHUM, AR

SUBJECT: ARGENTINE AMBASSADOR'S CALL ON ASSISTANT  
SECRETARY VAKY

1. (C-ENTIRE TEXT)
2. ON JANUARY 12 ARGENTINE AMBASSADOR AJA ESPIL CALLED ON ASSISTANT SECRETARY VAKY, WHO WAS ACCOMPANIED BY DAS GUZMAN AND DESK OFFICER BUMPUS.
3. AJA EXPRESSED SATISFACTION OVER THE PRESENTATION OF THE BEAGLE CHANNEL DISPUTE TO PAPAL MEDIATION, BUT CAUTIONED THAT THE PROPOSED WITHDRAWAL OF TROOPS TO EARLY 1977 POSITIONS COULD CAUSE DIFFICULTIES. AJA ARGUED THAT ARGENTINA GAINED WHAT IT WANTED FROM THE PAPAL MEDIATION, THE CHANCE TO CONTINUE NEGOTIATING THE ISSUE.
4. AJA NEXT TURNED TO HUMAN RIGHTS, WHERE HE DESCRIBED

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THE SITUATION AS IMPROVING. HE NOTED THE DISTORTED PUBLICITY WHICH ARGENTINA RECEIVES IN THE UNITED STATES, CITING THE REPORTS OF THE ARGENTINE INFORMATION SERVICE CENTER WHICH HAS JUST PUBLISHED A LIST OF 13,000 PEOPLE WHO HAVE ALLEGEDLY DISAPPEARED OR BEEN DETAINED IN ARGENTINA.

5. AJA NEXT SPOKE OF THE DISAPPEARANCE AND ASSASSINATION OF FOREIGN MINISTRY OFFICER HOLMBERG. THE WOMAN'S DEATH HAD CAUSED A REACTION IN ARGENTINA EQUAL TO THAT OF HIDALGO SOLA. SHE WAS FROM A CONSERVATIVE FAMILY AND COULD IN NO WAY BE TIED TO THE LEFT. THERE WAS A POSSIBILITY THAT THIS BARBAROUS ACT COULD SPUR THE GOVERNMENT INTO AN INVESTIGATION OF HER DEATH THAT COULD LEAD TO REVELATIONS ABOUT THE GROUPS WHICH CARRIED OUT DISAPPEARANCES. HE SUGGESTED THAT THE USG SEND A MESSAGE CONDEMNING THOSE WHO HAD KILLED HER. (COMMENT: HE LATER SPECULATED THAT THEY WERE NAVY ANTI-TERRORISTS WHO HAD A PERSONAL SCORE TO SETTLE WITH MS. HOLMBERG). IF THIS COULD NOT BE DONE, HE, AJA, SHOULD BE TOLD OF THE US CONCERN OVER HER DEATH SO THAT THIS COULD BE CONVEYED TO BUENOS AIRES. AMBASSADOR VAKY EXPRESSED THE U.S. SADNESS ON HEARING OF MS. HOLMBERG'S DEATH, NOT JUST BECAUSE IT HAD BEEN REQUESTED, BUT BECAUSE WE DID DEPLORE SUCH KILLING.

~~Department of State, A/GIS/IPS/SRP~~~~Change to~~~~( ) Release ( ) Excise ( ) Deny ( ) Declassify~~~~Exemptions b ( ) ( ) E.O. 13526 25x ( ) ( ) ( )~~~~Declassify after~~~~With concurrence of:~~~~\_\_\_\_\_ obtained \_\_\_\_\_ not obt.~~~~IPS by \_\_\_\_\_ Date 12-5-16~~

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6. THE AMBASSADOR SAID THE U.S. COULD ASSIST THE VIDELA GOVERNMENT BY PROTESTING THIS ASSASSINATION. IF ARGENTINA IS TO CHANGE ITS IMAGE AS THE WORST HUMAN RIGHTS OFFENDER IN THE HEMISPHERE, IT NEEDS U.S. UNDERSTANDING AND COOPERATION TO MAKE THOSE CHANGES.

7. AMBASSADOR VAKY THEN SPOKE OF OUR CONTINUING CONCERN

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OVER THE HUMAN RIGHTS SITUATION IN ARGENTINA. HE ASKED WHY THE DISAPPEARANCES WENT ON WHEN THE TERROR HAD ENDED? HOW COULD YOU POSSIBLY EXPLAIN IT? WHY WAS NO INFORMATION GIVEN TO THE MOTHERS OF THE PLAZA ABOUT THEIR CHILDREN? WHY WERE PRISONERS STILL DETAINED WITHOUT TRIAL? THE GENERAL SITUATION, WHICH IS BAD, TROUBLES US DEEPLY.

8. AJA COUNTERED THAT VIDELA HAD MADE POSITIVE EFFORTS, BUT PERHAPS HAD NOT RECEIVED THE HELP HE SHOULD HAVE FROM THE UNITED STATES. NOW THAT THE OAS IAHRC VISIT WAS SCHEDULED FOR MAY, THE U.S. SHOULD ASSIST THE VIDELA GOVERNMENT TO MAKE THE NECESSARY HUMAN RIGHTS IMPROVEMENTS. AJA SUGGESTED A VISIT BY AMBASSADOR VAKY WOULD STRENGTHEN VIDELA'S HAND AGAINST THE HARDLINERS AND THUS MAKE FURTHER PROGRESS ON HUMAN RIGHTS POSSIBLE- IT WOULD ENCOURAGE MOVEMENT BEFORE THE IAHRC VISIT. MOREOVER, SAID AJA, IT WOULD ALLOW VAKY A CHANCE TO MEET THE NEW FOREIGN MINISTER AND THE PRESIDENT. AJA THEN RETURNED TO AND PRESSED HIS EARLIER ARGUMENT THAT A VAKY VISIT WAS NECESSARY TO ASSIST VIDELA. MARCH WOULD BE THE PERFECT TIME FOR THE VISIT. THAT IS WHEN THE GREATEST PRESSURE WILL BE PLACED ON VIDELA. THE ECONOMIC NEWS WILL BE BAD AND THE

THE DIFFICULTIES WITH CHILEAN TROOP WITHDRAWALS FROM THE ISLANDS SOUTH OF THE BEAGLE CHANNEL WILL HURT VIDELA. ASSISTANT SECRETARY VAKY SAID HE WOULD CONSIDER THE AMBASSADOR'S REQUEST. IN ANY EVENT HE COULD NOT VISIT BEFORE MARCH, IF A VISIT WERE TO BE SCHEDULED. HE NOTED THAT HIS VISIT COULD NOT BRING THE IMPROVEMENTS IN THE HUMAN RIGHTS AREA THAT ARE SO NECESSARY IN ARGENTINA. VIDELA AND THE ARGENTINES WOULD HAVE TO DO THIS BY THEMSELVES.

9. COMMENT: AMBASSADOR AJA ESPIL ON SEVERAL PREVIOUS OCCASIONS HAS PRESSED FOR HIGH LEVEL STATE DEPARTMENT VISITS TO ARGENTINA TO SHORE UP VIDELA'S DOMESTIC POSITION. D

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